Haiti - A Natural Disaster?

DIRECTIONS

Read the following news story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions.

STORY

**Island Nation of Haiti Reels After Earthquake Causes 'Enormous' Damage**

01/13/2010

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/world/jan-june10/haiti_01-13.html>

Questions using the text

1. **What happened in Haiti January 12, 2010?**In Haiti on January 12th, 2010 there was a disastrous earthquake with a 7.0 magnitude, the worst earthquake to hit Haiti in two centuries.
2. **Why did so many buildings collapse?**So many buildings collapsed becauseHaiti has struggled for decades with political instability and natural disasters. So the buildings were built shoddily and unsafe in normal circumstances.
3. **What is the relationship between Haiti and the United States?**The President of the United Sates, Obama, extended his condolences and pledged that America would give full support to the people of Haiti for rescue and humanitarian assistance.
4. **How can Americans help the situation in Haiti?**The Americans can help the situation because they can send their military personals over there to distribute food and water and also have them working to open the port and the airport to be able to bring in more food, water and necessities.
5. **What happened in Haiti in 1804?**In 1804 the nation of Haiti was created, just after the world’s first successful black slave rebellion led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines against France.
6. **Who was “Papa Doc?”**

“Papa Doc was Francois Duvalier who took power of Haiti and ruled over killing all the oppositions and causing tens of thousands of people to be tortured and killed under Francois and his son.

1. **Who was Jean Bertrand Aristide?**

Jean Bertrand Aristide was a slum priest who was elected by the Haitians by a ‘landslide victory’.

1. **What is the Gonave microplate?**The Gonave microplate is what most of Haiti lies on, it is a sliver of the earths crust between the North American plate and the Caribbean plate to the South.

**Extended Tasks**

1. **Watch the Video and then explain exactly the causes of the Earthquake in Port au Prince. You can add any images you can find.** The causes of the earthquake in Part au Prince was because of a slip fault. There is a fault line right through Haiti, one side going left and one side going right and it slipped causing the 7.0 magnitude of the earthquake. The fault that caused this shake was only 6 miles deep so the shake was stronger than it would have been if it was 200 miles deep.
2. **Why Did So many People Die in Haiti?**So many people died in Haiti because there was so many aftershocks and they were so strong, the highest aftershock being 5.9 so the already damaged buildings etc are being shook so much that it causes a lot more damage.

**The devastating earthquakes that hit China on 12 May 2008, Italy on 6 April 2009 and Haiti in January 2010 all measured above 6.0 and took many lives. But why was the human cost so much greater for Haiti?**

**Use the article below to answer this question in a number of points. You will need to add data to help back up your answer.**

[**http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8510900.stm**](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8510900.stm)

So many people died in the earthquake in Haiti on January 12th 2010 compared to the earthquake in China on May 12th 2008 because:

* The size of the earthquake
* How near the earthquake was to the surface
* The density of the population near its epicenter
* The heavily urbanized areas nearby
* Poverty can also play a big role in the death toll of people because 72.1% of people in Haiti live on less than $2 a day which means that they live in small, shanty-houses which are badly constructed buildings.
* The country of Haiti does not have much money to spend on the buildings so more people will die in the damage of them.
* Corruption – people take short cuts because they are bribed
* Because Haiti is such a large city with so many different structures this means that all the rubble that comes from the buildings after the quake would mean that more people would die in the rubble.
* Because a lot of important government and other organizations were destroyed in the quake there was no quick reaction to rescue people due to the fact that people from America etc had to come in and help rescue people. So by the time they got there, there were many people already dead because they hadn’t been rescued quick enough.

